Spring rainfall shows big contrasts across the UK

27 May 2011 - Provisional Met Office climate figures for spring 2011 indicate that rainfall amounts across the UK have varied widely from north and west to south and east.

Even though further rain is expected across much of the country before the season ends, parts of the east and south are likely to be heading towards their driest spring on record. These records date back more than 100 years to 1910.

For statistical purposes, the meteorological spring is the combined months of March, April and May and provisional figures are from 1 March to 25 May.

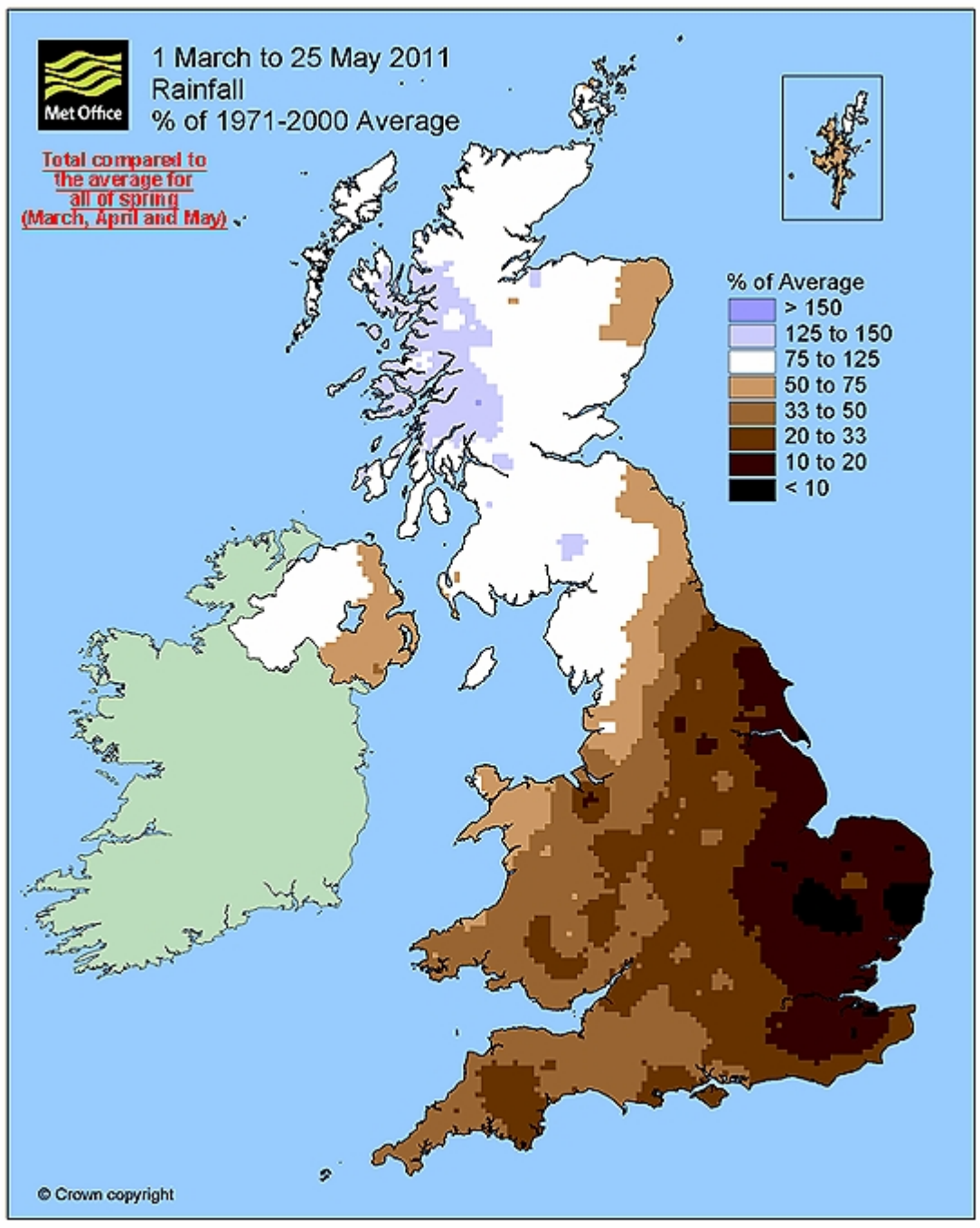
The driest region has been East Anglia, where rainfall amounts show that only 17mm of rain has fallen, just 13% of the long term spring average which is 134.9mm.

However, at the opposite of the country, parts of north and west Scotland have had a wet season, with Argyll recording 538.6mm of rain, well above the long term average of 422.0mm.

This table shows rainfall figures for Spring across the UK. *All figures are provisional up to 25th May 2011.*

Location	Actual (mm) 1 March to 25 May	Percentage of 1971 to 2000 average	Long term spring average (mm)
UK	164.9 mm	71 %	231.7 mm
England	65.4 mm	36 %	179.4 mm
Northern Ireland	180.6 mm	78 %	232.2 mm
Scotland	336.3 mm	111 %	304.1 mm
Wales	128.6 mm	45 %	285.4 mm

This map shows rainfall figures for Spring across the UK as a percentage of the 1971-2000 long term average. *All figures are provisional up to 25th May 2011.*



The big differences in rainfall pattern across the UK, illustrate just how varied the weather can be over the country. 'Blocked' weather patterns have kept many southern and eastern counties dry but Atlantic weather systems and their rain-bearing fronts have affected regions further north and west.

Spring featured high temperatures especially during April, helping to make it one of the warmest springs on record. However, with several more days to go we need to wait until next week to see if it becomes a record-breaker.

Across the UK, the Bank Holiday weather forecast looks set to offer rather changeable conditions, with a mixture of bright or sunny spells but also some rain or showers at times.

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